

Tshombe, Moise
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The UN Should Probe

Moise Tshombe, the controversial former premier of the Congo, testily told an Algerian court the other day that the American Central Intelligence Agency had a hand in hijacking his private plane and landing him in Algiers where he was sentenced to extradition and probable execution in the Congo.

That, of course, is preposterous, but no more so than Mr. Tshombe's whole unhappy situation. He is not charged with any crimes against the Algerians, and therefore, whatever his past actions in the Congo, an Algerian court has no competence to pass on them. He is not a victim of the CIA, but he is certainly the victim of a bizarre, uncivilized plot that civilized nations ought not to tolerate.

Mr. Tshombe's main publicly known "crime" while in the Congo was to collaborate with white European business interests, and bring in white mercenaries to maintain internal stability. That is not treason.

Less clear is the Tshombe role, if any, in the white-led uprising recently quelled by the Congo government with the aid of American transport planes. If there has been a campaign to seize Congolese territory or overthrow President Mobutu's government, the story is different. But so far there are no facts to justify Mr. Tshombe's execution.

African delegates to the United Nations should demand a full investigation, at least to show their concern for fair play and truth.